

REMARKS

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-14 and 17-19 are pending for the Examiner's consideration, with claims 1 and 14 being the independent claims. Claim 14 has been amended herein to include the subject matter of allowable claim 16 (and intervening claim 15). Claim 17 has been amended herein to depend from claim 14. Claims 15, 16, and 20-22 have been cancelled herein. Applicants respectfully submit that the foregoing amendments introduce no new matter, and the Examiner is referred in this regard to the specification and claims as originally filed. Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the allowance of claims 1-13, and the indication of allowability for claims 16 and 17. As a result of the foregoing amendments, the present application includes allowed claims 1-13, claim 14 rewritten in allowable form, and claims 17-19 that depend from allowable claim 14. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application includes only allowed or allowable claims, and, therefore, is in condition for immediate allowance.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claims 14, 15, 18, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,338,931 ("the '931 patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,575,160 ("the '160 patent"). Claim 14 has been amended herein to include the subject matter of allowable claim 16 (and intervening claim 15), thereby rendering this rejection moot as to claim 14. Claim 15 has been cancelled herein, thereby rendering this rejection moot as to claim 15. Claims 18 and 19 depend from amended claim 14, thereby rendering this rejection moot as to claims 18 and 19.

Claims 20-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the '931 patent. Claims 20-22 have been cancelled herein, thereby rendering this rejection moot as to claims 20-22.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that the foregoing remarks demonstrate that entry of these amendments places the present application in condition for allowance. All of the stated

grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

Dated: September 23, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

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